

Current Regulations for Hook-and-Line Vessels in Groundfish and Halibut Fisheries Off Alaska (50 CFR 679.24 & 679.42)

50 CFR 679.24

(e) Seabird avoidance gear and methods for hook-and-line vessels fishing for groundfish

(1) Applicability.

The operator of a vessel that is required to obtain a Federal fisheries permit under § 679.4(b)(1) must comply with the seabird avoidance measures in paragraphs (e)(2) and (e)(3) of this section while fishing for groundfish with hook-and-line gear in the BSAI, in the GOA, or in waters of the State of Alaska that are shoreward of the BSAI and the GOA.

(2) Requirements.

The operator of a vessel described in paragraph (e)(1) of this section must conduct fishing operations in the following manner:

- (i) Use hooks that when baited, sink as soon as they are put in the water.
 - (ii) If offal is discharged while gear is being set or hauled, it must be discharged in a manner that distracts seabirds from baited hooks, to the extent practicable. The discharge site on board a vessel must be either aft of the hauling station or on the opposite side of the vessel from the hauling station.
 - (iii) Make every reasonable effort to ensure that birds brought on board alive are released alive and that wherever possible, hooks are removed without jeopardizing the life of the birds.
- (3) For a vessel greater than or equal to 26 ft (7.9 m) LOA, the operator of that vessel described in paragraph (e)(1) of this section must employ one or more of the following seabird avoidance measures:
- (i) Tow a streamer line or lines during deployment of gear to prevent birds from taking hooks;
 - (ii) Tow a buoy, board, stick or other device during deployment of gear, at a distance appropriate to prevent birds from taking hooks. Multiple devices may be employed;
 - (iii) Deploy hooks underwater through a lining tube at a depth sufficient to prevent birds from settling on hook during deployment of gear; or
 - (iv) Deploy gear only during the hours specified below, using only the minimum vessel's lights necessary for safety.

Hours that Hook-and-Line Gear Can Be Deployed for Specified Longitudes According to paragraph (e)(3)(iv) of this section. (Hours are Alaska local time).

Calendar Month	Longitude		
	Shoreward to 150°W	151 to 165°W	166 to 180°W
January	1800-0700	1900-0800	2000-0900
February	1900-0600	2000-0700	2100-0800
March	2000-0500	2100-0600	2200-0700
April	2100-0400	2200-0500	2300-0600
May	2200-0300	2300-0400	2400-0500
June	this measure cannot be exercised during June		
July	this measure cannot be exercised during July		
August	2200-0400	2300-0500	2400-0600
September	2000-0500	2100-0600	2200-0700
October	1900-0600	2000-0700	2100-0800
November	1800-0700	1900-0800	2000-0900
December	1700-0700	1800-0800	1900-0900

§ 679.42 *Limitations on use of QS and IFQ.*

(b) Gear.

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(2) Seabird avoidance gear and methods.

The operator of a vessel using gear authorized at § 679.2 while fishing for IFQ halibut or hook-and-line gear while fishing for IFQ sablefish must comply with requirements for seabird avoidance gear and methods set forth at § 679.24(e).